



Disaster and Emergency Management Resources

Storm-damaged Shrubs and Ornamentals

- When shrubs and ornamentals are dormant, they can tolerate standing water for several days. Growing plants cannot.
- Silting may not hurt trees and shrubs, but it can threaten ornamental plants. Wash silt (flood sediment) away from these plants with a garden hose and rake the excess soil away from the plant as soon as the silt dries.
- If the soil around plants has been eroded by floodwaters, replace with good topsoil.
- Don't allow heavy equipment to move close to trunks of remaining shrubs and trees. Remember that most roots extend well beyond the outer branches; therefore, heavy equipment can damage roots and compact soil.
- Trim partially damaged shrubs and trees as lightly as possible to reshape. Complete reshaping could take several growing seasons.
- Some uprooted plants can be reset if the root ball is fairly intact with a compact root system, white healthy roots are showing, and most of the top growth remains.
- Prepare remaining plants for overwintering. Mulch 3 to 4 inches around plant. Do not fertilize newly set plants. Wait until late winter or very early spring just before new growth.
- Do not move deciduous plants until after their leaves are off.

Adapted from resource material developed by the South Carolina Extension Service entitled "After the Hurricane," the Virginia Extension Service entitled "After a Disaster" and the Florida Extension Service entitled "The Disaster Handbook"